

— S A N T A B A R B A R A —

Summer Solstice

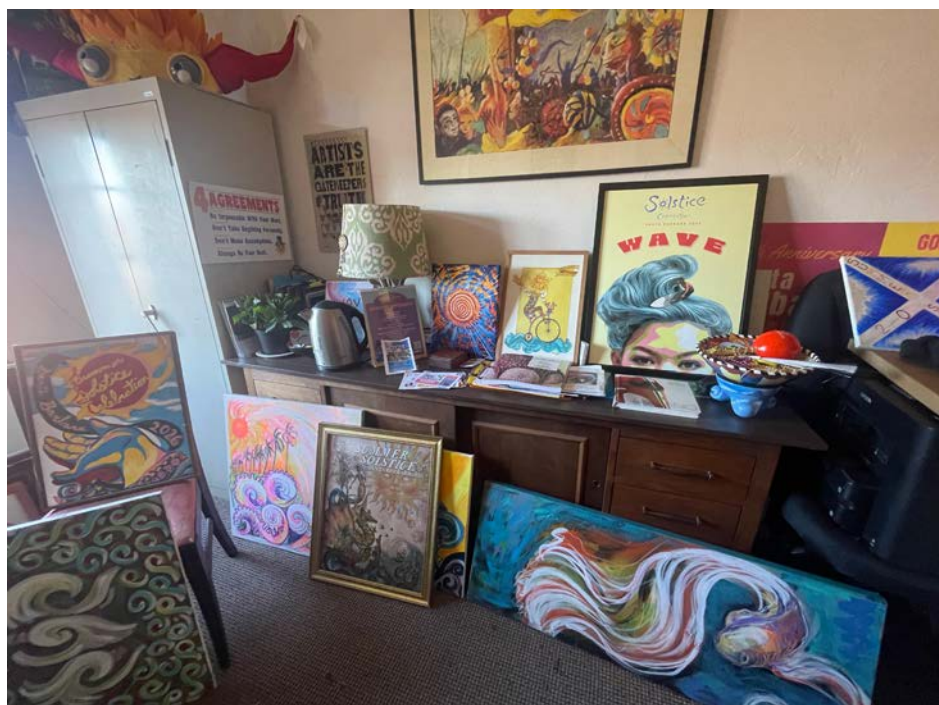


Highlights from the 2026 Solstice Celebration

September 2025 - June 2026

POSTER ART CONTEST

Each year, Solstice kicks off the season with its Poster Art Contest. The 2026 contest launched in the Fall 2025, following the selection of the theme “WAVE.” The theme was chosen through public voting online and at events—including the September 20 Equinox Kickoff and Theme Party at the Red Piano.



Each year, artists drop their read-to-hang- artwork off at the Solstice Office at 924 Anacapa Street, pay a nominal fee to participate in the Poster Art Contest. Between 25 and 35 artists participate.

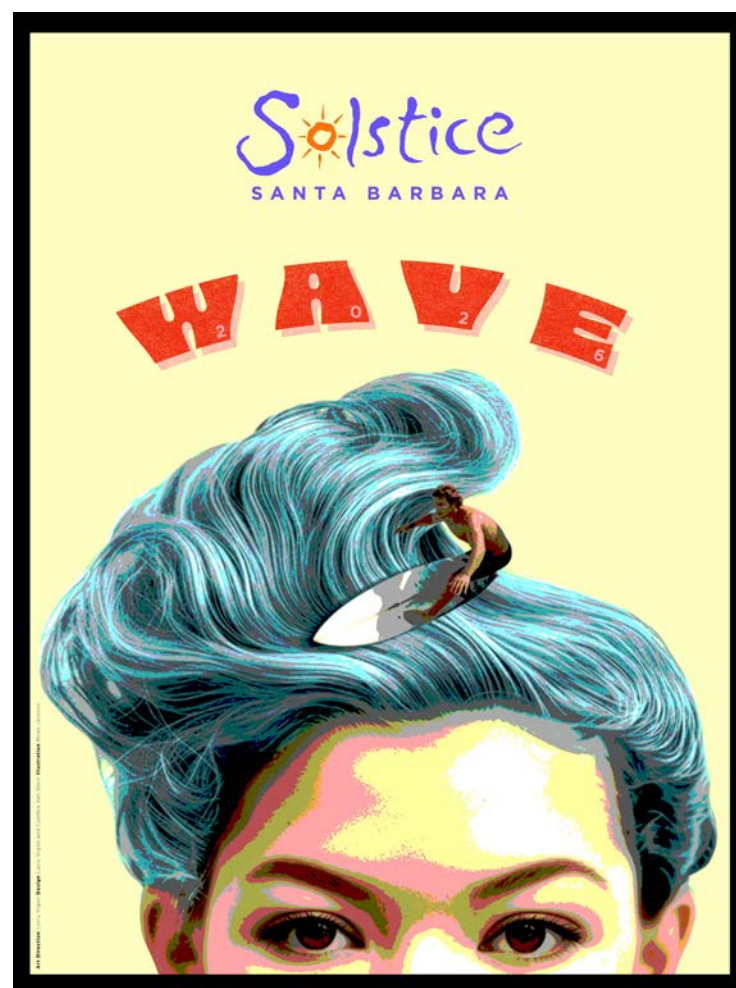
The Poster Art contest culminated in a juried exhibition of artwork at the DSBIA (Downtown Organization) for First Thursday in March, 2026. Hundreds of attendees—including friends of the artists, art enthusiasts, and passersby—celebrated the creativity and diversity of submissions.

The winning entry, “WAVE” by internationally acclaimed artist Larry Vigon, was announced at the CEC HUB March 26, as part of the BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade®

Vigon’s work is recognized worldwide, most notably through his iconic album covers for Fleetwood Mac, Tom Petty, and Frank Sinatra. Beyond the poster, Vigon also designed a commemorative logo for Solstice and a special Winter Solstice greeting card.



John Palminteri (assisted by Stephen Meade, holding the mic) and Penny Little presented the winning entry from Larry Vigon at the CEC Hub. DJ Darla Bea and guitarist Magic Jordan in the background.



WORKSHOP OPENING - MAY 2026

A picture paints a thousand words.. Here are some snapshots



Before the move-in, the CAW is an empty space.



Artistic Director Riccardo Morrison in the "yard", unloading one of our storage containers. Everything must be brought in to create the Workspace.

The Workshop at the CAW at 631 Garden Street is where the magic begins. We invite the public to join our team of artists, production specialists and makers to create the people-powered, people-created parade -- largely out of recycled and repurposed materials. Solstice is one of the few places in the world that teaches the celebration arts.



Sarah Rothschild Registration Volunteer and Brenda Galloway, Costumer, in the Workshop Registration Tent.



Float Builders; the Workshop is a construction zone!



Tech Director Jim Sun Bear, master of tools



The RE-MAKE OF THE RAINBOW DRAGON: Pali X-Mano, Giant Inflatable Maker



FROM VISION TO REALITY

Pali usually begins with a sketch, then a maquette (miniature version) of his vision-- to create a pattern which is enlarged, and mapped to the pieces of inflatable material. Then the pieces are sewn together on our heavy duty surger sewing machines.

Several years ago, Santa Barbara Beautiful sponsored the repair of the Dragon, and new blowers. However, the 26 year old dragon was still leaking air because the old fabric had deteriorated further. This year, **Santa Barbara Beautiful** again sponsored the restoration, a complete remake into a slightly smaller dragon, using mostly new materials, saving what could be saved. It was sewn on our new heavy duty, all rounder sewing machine which was made possible by a grant from the **Santa Barbara Foundation Small Capacity Building Grant**, and purchased from **Grant House Sewing Machines**.

The newly re-created Dragon was in the 2026 Parade and landed in the Pali Art Garden in the Festival, and will live on for years to come!

May 8, 2026

Local News for a Global Village | www.VoiceSB.com

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Dragon Rising at SB Summer Solstice

By Isaac Hernández de Lipa / VOICE

THE SOLSTICE DRAGON IS GETTING A NEW SKIN. For 26 years, Pali's Rainbow Dragon has delighted audiences large and small. Ever since it was featured in the 2000 Summer Solstice parade, the 40-foot-long inflatable dragon has popped up and brightened many parties. Now, new life needs to be breathed into this local inflatable favorite.

"The dragon's coated nylon fabric is now emitting more air than we can put into it," said Solstice Artistic Director Riccardo Morrison, standing next to the old dragon, inflated one more time before it will be sacrificed.



Volunteers are needed at the Solstice workshop

"It's actually 60 feet long, if you unravel its wavy body," shared creator Pali X-Mano (Pali Szilvassy), in his distinct Hungarian accent. He first started creating inflatables back in Budapest, and the dragon is a favorite.

Revived many times with repairs, Summer Solstice earned a grant two years ago, from Santa Barbara Beautiful to reanimate the dragon for the parade's 50th anniversary. At that time, two new blowers were added and with the help of propping sticks inspired by Salvador Dali's drawings, the Rainbow Dragon returned.

"There's no fixing this," said Morrison. "It has to be redone. The idea is to use it as a pattern and create a new one that's similar. As



Dragon artist **Pali X-Mano** and Solstice Artistic Director **Riccardo Morrison**

we make the pattern, we can shrink it a little bit, like one third, to get it to where it can have one single blower. The new one will be over 30 feet long. It will still be impressive."

The new process will be faster than creating an inflatable from scratch, which starts with building a Styrofoam sculpture and adding lines where the seams will go.

Pali, whose inflatables can be rented and have been featured in events from Kentucky to Los Angeles, and even in the film *Me Him Her* (Max Landis, 2015), is also preparing a handful of previous inflatables for a sculpture garden at Alameda Park after the parade on Saturday, June 20th. This year's theme is *Wave*, with a parade start

Reborn Rainbow Dragon in the 2026 Parade (below)





Each year a Parade King and Queen are selected. Here, King Clay, owner of Three Pickels' whose name was drawn out of a hat, is pushed down the street by his attendants.

With WAVE as the theme, there were a lot of hands waving, ocean waves, and all sorts of wavey things happening in the Parade. Solstice continues to have more modular floats which come apart and are part of the Festival on Saturday and Sunday, as a photo op, giving spectators a chance to interact with the artwork up close. The newly re-imagined Pass the Hat Ensemble became "Feed the Beat". (pictured above) designed by new artist-in-residence Hope Christoferson. .



Solstice showcases the creativity of our local performers, artisans, dancers, makers, local heroes & everyday people expressing something joyful, creative and unique!



One of our sponsors -- Californo Pizzeria --supported an artist in residence to create a pizza oven float, with Beto Diaz and his ensemble throwing (faux) pizza dough and presenting a fully cooked faux pizza as part of their antics.



More Parade Ensembles



DJ Darla Bea on the La Boheme float inspired by this year's poster art by Larry Vigon - to accompany their dance routines.



Waving Clown Posse: Artistic Director of Kerfuffle Theater, EJ Huerta with a posse of clowns waving, a clown car performing improvisational street theater.



Float Pushers "Get the Best Workout of your life!" said the poster!



The Last Float: Artist Gregory Beeman collaboration with Tech Director Jim Sun Bear bringing a percussory wave of drums with spectators joining and following the ensemble into the Park.



Clap Hands: Diane Arnold and Mary Williams are waving to the crowd with their two 13-foot high hands.

— SANTA BARBARA —
Summer Solstice



Former Executive Director and Junior Artist Coordinator Claudia Bratton's "Neptune's World" Inspired by a 1982 Solstice float.



Marc McGinnis - former Solstice stilt walker and retired university professor participates -- now as a spectator



Wave Rave The Carey/Foreman family and friends in the Parade



World Dance for Humanity's Liz Ricard and Heather Williams lead a wave of 45 dancers "celebrating radio waves of freedom, joy and love."



Teresa Kusky Oshay, Director of La Boheme Dance Troupe, brings more than 100 dancers. Joined by DJ Darla Bea and a 3-D rendition of the 2026 Solstice Poster!



3-Day Free Music & Arts Festival - in Alameda Park



FUNtopia Entrance sponsored again by Santa Barbara Beautiful, designed by Luke Holden of Flying Shade



"Musiphant" by Pali X-Mano was in the Parade and on display in the Park. . When complete this elephant will be part of the international herd



A safe semi-monitored Bike Parking area with racks for those arriving on bikes, sponsored by Sustainability & Resilience, City of Santa Barbara



Pali Art Garden



The Main Stage features non-stop entertainment from Friday late afternoon through Sunday early evening. Local and regional favorites (and occasional "star" guests) share their talent with our audiences. [Pictured above "Red Fish"]



Portal to West Side of Park created by David Machcek



Shaded Area of Beer & Wine Garden

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Summer Solstice
FESTIVAL 2026



CommUnity Stage in FUNtopia sponsored by the Santa Barbara County Bowl and Roll N Rock 805



Beautifying in the Beer Garden Hair Salon



Modular element from La Bohemes 2026 Ensemble



SSC Board Member Jonathan Alburge from the Flag Factory, each year presents a SPIN THE WHEEL game with great prizes!

SANTA BARBARA

Summer Solstice

FESTIVAL: FUNtopia 2026



"Murmerations" Shaded Area & Photo Op



Mural Painting in the Park



The Rosal Ortega Flamenco group [sponsored by Miguel Avila of the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce] on the CommUnity Stage.



Workshops and activities for all ages in the FUNtopia Zone



Arts & Crafts Vendors, Face Painting, Hands-on Arts Activities for children in the FUNtopia Zone.



BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade, Fall & Spring EQUINOX PARTIES

CALLING ALL ARTISTS!



LET'S PAINT A BRIGHTER FUTURE!

Professional or Amateur,
Fine Artists, Car Painters,
Tattoo Artists, Sculptors,
Dabblers, Young or Old,
Local Heroes, Cultural
Creatives of all sorts



Paint a mini-elephant sculpture.
for Solstice! Be part of the
BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade®
Winner receives the opportunity to
paint full-sized elephant sculpture,
international recognition, stipend,
and winning elephant design in the
2026 Solstice Parade.



On display at the Santa Barbara Public Library, were mini-elephant sculptures from the international initiative and several original handpainted elephants by local fine artists -- the first entries in the BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade™.

SolsticeParade.com • ElephantParade-usa.com

BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade®

Spring / Fall Equinox



On display at the CEC HUB, more than 60 mini-elephants were distributed and painted by local artists, amateurs and professionals and talented youth. The original, one of a kind artwork was then auctioned off as a fundraiser for Solstice. There are still some elephants available for sale.

— SANTA BARBARA —
Summer Solstice

Fall Equinox Theme Party at the Red Piano

SANTA BARBARA
Summer Solstice
 CELEBRATION
 2026 Kick-off Party!

Sat. Sept. 20
 6 - 9 PM

The Red Piano
 519 State Street

VOTE for the 2026 Theme

Music • Connection
 Refreshments

PRESENTATION:
 Let's Paint a
 Brighter Future!

INTRODUCING:
 The BIGGEST LITTLE Elephant Parade®

MUSIC & Musings
 Crispin Barrymore &
 Friends

3-5 PM 519 State Activities for kids & families: "Chalk the Elephant"




Elephants on display, introducing the BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade™ at the Red Piano.



Full sized elephant sculpture from Elephant Parade™ was part of the fun and theme gathering process at the Red Piano.

November 6 Preview at the Library

SANTA BARBARA
Summer Solstice
 CELEBRATION

FIRST THURSDAY NOV. 6

THE ELEPHANTS
 ARE COMING!

DOWNTOWN
 PUBLIC LIBRARY

5-8 PM
 40 E ANAPAMU



Christopher Noxon Elephant in Parade



SOLSTICEPARADE.COM



The first entries in the BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade™ by local artists.

LET IT GLOW Winter Solstice



WINTER SOLSTICE! Building on the success of the previous year's Winter Solstice "Let It Glow," Solstice once again joined forces with the Brasscals, Fishbon, and our community for a lighted-costume street party on State Street on Saturday, December 20.

Hundreds of participants illuminated the longest night of the year, bringing together artists, dancers, musicians, makers, passersby and locals for an evening of light, movement, creativity, and joyful play. Special projections by Jon Smith of **The Environment Makers** transformed the 700 block of State Street with imagery created by artist Larry Vigon, while sponsor logos illuminated the sidewalk in the 500 block. The **Brasscals** and **Fishbon** led the festive procession down State Street, along with lighted art cars --beginning at **Longoria Wines** and culminating with live performances at **Institution Ale**. In recognition of the success of the past two events, the Downtown Santa Barbara Improvement Association (**DSBIA**) will support "Let It Glow" again in 2026.



Spring EQUINOX PARTIES BIGGEST Little Elephant Parade



The EQUINOX WEEKEND at Son Y Sabor was a 2-day Exhibition and Saturday night party and reception. The display of mini elephants moved the following Thursday to the CED for the final auction.

The Christopher Noxon full-sized elephant sculpture was featured at both events, and pushed up from the 400 block to the 1200 block of State Street by volunteers and staff.

The Trunk Show at the CEC HUB was a fundraising auction for Solstice 2026, featuring more than 60 artist-painted miniature elephants, each a unique work created in partnership with Elephant Parade®, the international public art initiative. Many sculptures also incorporated the QuickTales app, allowing visitors to hear an artist-recorded story directly from the scanning their phone over the artwork.

BIGGEST
Little Elephant Parade®
**EQUINOX
WEEKEND**



EXHIBITION mini elephants
SATURDAY MARCH 21, 1-6 PM
SUNDAY MARCH 22, 1-6 PM
PARTY WITH SOLSTICE!!
SATURDAY MARCH 21, 7-10 PM

SOLSTICEPARADE.COM

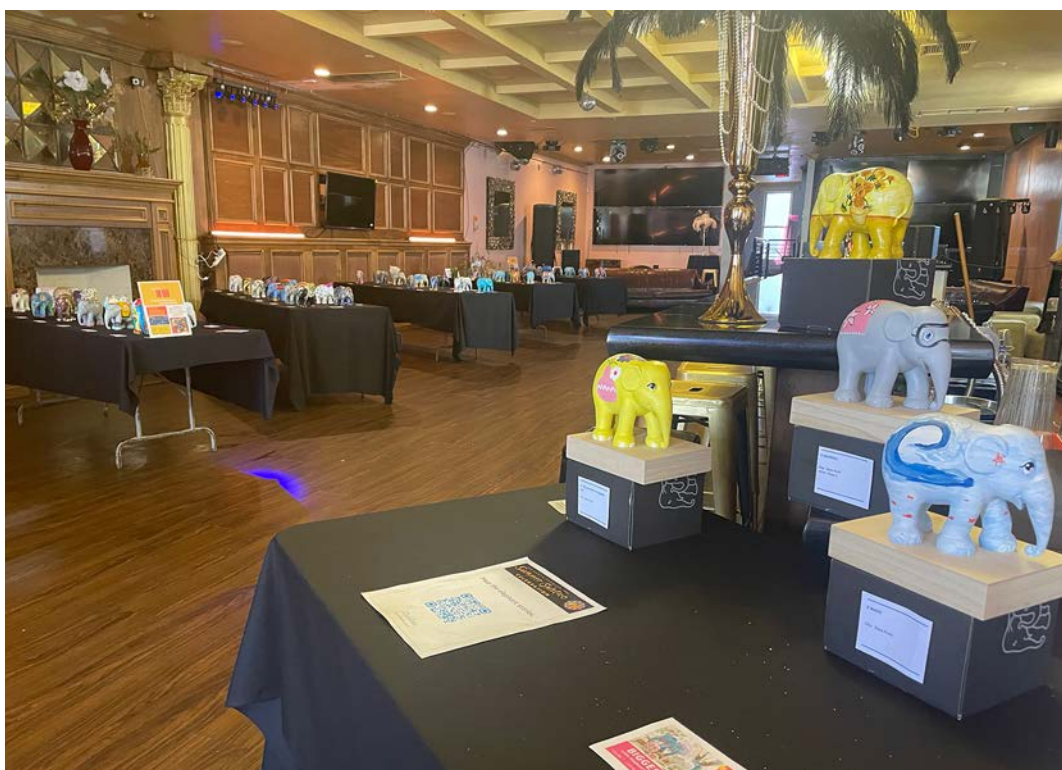
PRESENTED BY
SOLSTICE
SANTA BARBARA
SON Y SABOR
409 STATE STREET
MARCH 21-22



MUSIC! FOOD! CONNECTION!



Rhythm Industrial Complex, Love Lightning, Red Fish performed entertained for the party on Saturday night at Son Y Sabor



Son Y Sabor hosted the two-day Opening Exhibition in their upstairs third floor ballroom.

SOLSTICE
santa barbara

**BIGGEST LITTLE
ELEPHANT PARADE®**

Trunk Show & Art Auction

Silent Auction
Beats by DJ Darla Bea
Libations
Guitar Stylings By Magic Jordan


\$20
Donation
REFUNDED
if you buy a
Mini-Elephant

Support Solstice, Artists & Elephant Conservation!

MARCH 26 **5-8 PM**
COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL
COUNCIL - CEC HUB

May 23 SOIREE & ART AUCTION



Solstice once again held its Spring Soirée fundraiser at the same private home in Montecito. The evening featured live entertainment, fine art, wine, culinary offerings, creative installations, live and silent auctions benefiting the Summer Solstice Celebration. Guests enjoyed aerial and fire performances by Electricirque, dance performances by La Boheme, and the ambient guitar stylings of Quique Hernandez.

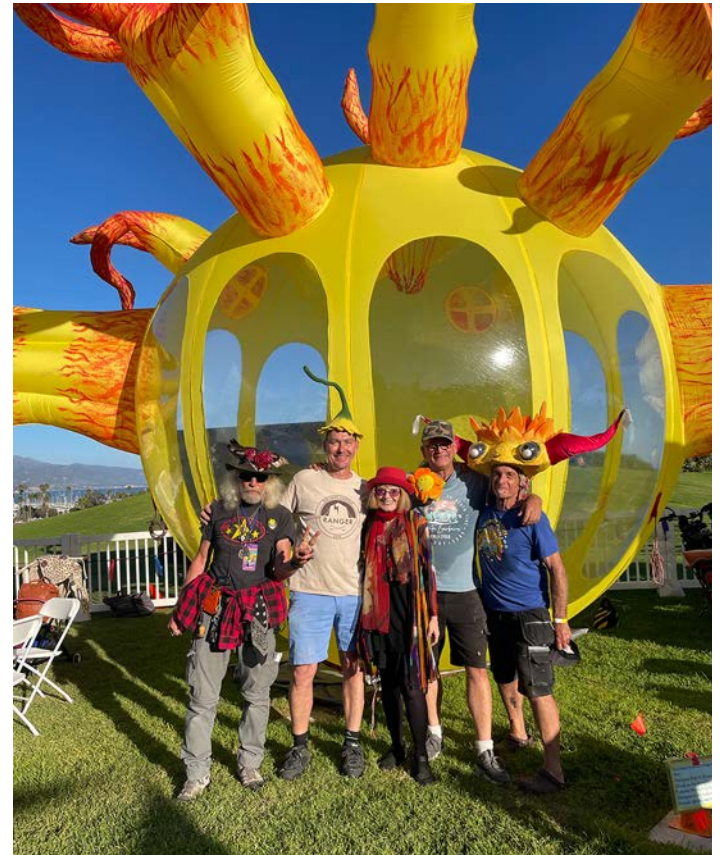
The auctions included an impressive collection of artwork donated by notable local artists and curated in part by Art & Soul, with participating artists receiving 50% of the proceeds from the sale of their work. Wine, coffee, and food were generously donated by local businesses, with catering provided by Sazón Latino Mexican Restaurant. Photography was provided by Isaac Hernandez..

The Solstice Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, artists, performers, local businesses, and community members all rose to the occasion, making the second annual Spring Soirée a stunning, joyful, and successful celebration. The event showcased the creative spirit and collaborative energy that have made the Summer Solstice Celebration one of Santa Barbara's most beloved community traditions.



Above. La Boheme Dancers, On the right, one of the pieces in the live art auction by Nurit Ruckenstein.

— SANTA BARBARA —
Summer Solstice
Year-Round Collaborations



Solstice was an event partner for the Children's Creative Project PIECE TIME Fundraiser and their 50th Anniversary Saturday October 11. It was a beautiful collaboration of so many great local folks, non-profits. Solstice brought two of Pali's inflatables to "Solstify" the event. At the Solstice information and activity booth, we continued to collect submissions for the SOLSTICE 2026 THEME. Solstice had a blank elephant sculpture from the Elephant Parade® to chalk - which was quite popular with kids of all ages



SSC Board Member Patrick Davis was an honoree at the Piece Time fundraiser. **The Independent** had once dubbed him as "Saint Patrick" on their cover for saving the arts in Santa Barbara.



Solstice was an event partner for the Independent's Annual Backyard Brunch. Proceeds from this event benefit the Mickey Flacks Journalism Fund.



Our collaboration with the Elephant Parade® continues! Pali's "Musiphant" was selected by the to be part of the international "herd" of Elephant Parade™ sculptures.

For more information

WEBSITE <https://www.solsticeparade.com/>
 FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/SBSolstice>
 INSTAGRAM: @summersolsticesb
<https://instagram.com/summersolsticesb>
 TWITTER: @summersolstice.sb

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